

AUGUST 2015

PENN *lines*

Home-grown *talent*

*Pennsylvania artisans
with global reach*

PLUS

Slaw season

A heavy burden

Roofing impacts AC costs

PENN *lines* AUGUST

Vol. 50 • No. 8

Peter A. Fitzgerald
EDITOR

Katherine Hackleman
SENIOR EDITOR/WRITER

James Dulley
Janette Hess

Barbara Martin
Marcus Schneck
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS

W. Douglas Shirk
LAYOUT & DESIGN

Vonnie Kloss
ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION

Michelle M. Smith
MEDIA & MARKETING SPECIALIST

Penn Lines (USPS 929-700), the newsmagazine of Pennsylvania's electric cooperatives, is published monthly by the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, 212 Locust Street, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. *Penn Lines* helps 166,000 households of co-op consumer-members understand issues that affect the electric cooperative program, their local co-ops, and their quality of life. Electric co-ops are not-for-profit, consumer-owned, locally directed, and taxpaying electric utilities. *Penn Lines* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. The opinions expressed in *Penn Lines* do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, or local electric distribution cooperatives.

Subscriptions: Electric co-op members, \$5.42 per year through their local electric distribution cooperative. Preferred Periodicals postage paid at Harrisburg, PA 17107 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes with mailing label to *Penn Lines*, 212 Locust Street, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266.

Advertising: Display ad deadline is six weeks prior to month of issue. Ad rates upon request. Acceptance of advertising by *Penn Lines* does not imply endorsement of the product or services by the publisher or any electric cooperative. If you encounter a problem with any product or service advertised in *Penn Lines*, please contact: Advertising, *Penn Lines*, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. *Penn Lines* reserves the right to refuse any advertising.



Your Trademark Energy Partner

Board officers and staff, Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association: Chairman, Leroy Walls; Vice Chairman, Tim Burkett; Secretary, Barbara Miller; Treasurer, Rick Shope; President & CEO, Frank M. Betley

© 2015 Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

Visit with us at *Penn Lines Online*, located at: www.prea.com/Content/pennlines.asp. *Penn Lines Online* provides an email link to *Penn Lines* editorial staff, information on advertising rates, and an archive of past issues.

4 ENERGY MATTERS
Electric grid connects us all

6 KEEPING CURRENT
News items from across the Commonwealth

8 FEATURE
Home-grown talent
Pennsylvania artisans with global reach

12A COOPERATIVE CONNECTION
Information and advice from your local electric cooperative

14 TIME LINES
Your newsmagazine through the years

16 COUNTRY KITCHEN
'Tis the season for slaw

17 POWER PLANTS
Tempting vines

18 OUTDOOR ADVENTURES
It's a heavy burden, this fascination for things to lug my burden

19 SMART CIRCUITS
Roofing materials impact AC costs

20 CLASSIFIEDS

22 PUNCH LINES
Thoughts from Earl Pitts-Uhmerikun!
Eat up: Earl has some thoughts about food

23 RURAL REFLECTIONS
Summertime fun



ON THE COVER

Paul Staniszewski, a United Electric Cooperative member from Troutville, sells photos of flowers and elk through international photo services, as well as local galleries. *Photo by Paul Staniszewski*





BY KATHY HACKLEMAN
Senior Editor/Writer

Home-grown *talent*

Pennsylvania artisans with global reach

While everyone's opinion of art differs at least slightly, a simple definition is "something that is created through creative skill and imagination." Throughout Pennsylvania, there are artists who use everything from traditional tools of the trade — such as oils and pastels — to more modern equipment — digital cameras and image-editing software, as well as everything in between. Many artists create only for

PENNSYLVANIA ART: Photographer Paul Staniszewski, Troutville, is known worldwide for his photographs of elk, left, and flowers. Inset photo by David Anderson

their own enjoyment, or perhaps that of family and friends, but there are also Pennsylvanians whose works are on display throughout the United States and beyond.

Paul Staniszewski is no youngster — he retired several years ago — and he is relatively new to art; however, his photographs have spread across the globe.



PHOTO BY PAUL STANISZEWSKI

TULIPS IN BLOOM: Paul Staniszewski, a United Electric Cooperative member, began taking flower photos six years ago after becoming interested in macro photography. He has since expanded his field of interest to elk photos.

Staniszewski, a member of DuBois-based United Electric Cooperative, and his partner, Aldeen, relocated to Pennsylvania from New Jersey after they both retired. He is originally from the Pittsburgh area, and she grew up near DuBois, although they met in New Jersey, where both were teaching.

She says Staniszewski has always had an eye for design and the ability to visualize the harmony in objects. He does have a degree in industrial arts education, which included a number of design courses, but he bought his first camera only six years ago.

Happenstance

His interest in photography began by pure happenstance. A few years ago, a college student knocked on the door of the couple's home located in a wooded area near Troutville, asking permission to collect insect specimens from the adjacent East

Branch of the Mahoning Creek. They agreed.

As the student gathered her specimens, Staniszewski assisted her by using her camera to photograph the insects. He was instantly smitten by the world of macro photography (where small items are produced larger than life-size). He purchased the same kind of camera, and because the couple had so many plants around their house, he spent hours taking close-ups of both wild and cultivated flowers.

When he went to pick up his first film — yes, he was using film back then, although he uses a digital camera now — he was called into the manager's office and accused of passing off a professional's work as his own.

"They said, 'No one around here takes photos like that,'" Staniszewski recalls.

It wasn't long until he was selling his photographs at art shows and then at the Winkler Gallery and Art Education Center in DuBois. When the Elk Country Visitor Center near Benezette was preparing to open in 2010, area artists were invited to participate in a process that would end with three of them being chosen to sell their artwork at the center. Staniszewski's flowers earned him one of those spots.

His photos sold well, but it wasn't long before he decided to turn his attention away from flowers.

"I thought, 'People are coming here to see elk; I should be photographing elk,'" he recalls.

So he undertook an in-depth study of both wildlife photography and elk, figuring if he was going to photograph the 1,000-pound beasts, he needed to understand them. While it is certainly not suggested as a way for visitors to photograph elk at Benezette, Staniszewski has walked among them on such a regular basis that he doesn't fear

them, and they tolerate him.

"I have been close enough to some of the elk that I have actually touched them," he says.

What he has in return: thousands of photos of elk going about their daily lives. Bulls bugling. Cows grazing. Calves nursing.

He also has built up quite a reputation as an elk photographer. He sells what he terms a "substantial" numbers of photos — both elk and flowers — to the more than 400,000 people from across the world who now visit the center each year. He offers various sizes of matted and framed prints and frameable elk and flower note cards at the center and other area galleries, and also online at www.floralphoto.us. He has won numerous contests and been selected to have his photos printed in a number of state and national publications, but his widest exposure has come through his connection with Shutterstock and Flickr. Through those online photo services, Staniszewski has sold photos to many overseas publications, so there's a good chance that no matter where you see an elk photo, it could be a Staniszewski photo.

No one is more surprised at that than Staniszewski himself.

"I don't know a lot about photography," he says. "I can't believe how this has evolved."

Growth industry

Staniszewski isn't the only Pennsylvania artist to find himself in a second artistic career that only tangentially relates to the first.

For years, Ben Bear operated a produce farm near Mechanicsburg, selling to local farm markets. Twenty years ago, he began planting a hard-shelled gourd he had seen in New England, thinking he could sell them along with pumpkins as fall decorations. Bear, who made cabinets during the farm's off-season, began using



his woodworking tools on the hard-shelled gourds, and soon realized he had the makings of a new career on his hands.

Fast-forward to today — Bear, a member of Gettysburg-based Adams Electric Cooperative, owns the largest gourd-crafting business in the United States, producing \$32,000 worth of decorated gourds per week. His company's decorated gourds are sold at retail outlets in 49 states and Canada, and worldwide through the Meadowbrooke Gourds' website at www.mbgourds.com. Meadowbrooke Gourds is one of Adams Electric Cooperative's Co-op Connections business partners that offers a 20 percent discount off the purchase of one gourd for cooperative members who have a Co-op Connections Card.

Darren Hartsock, wholesale sales manager, began working for Bear 22 years ago, when he was in the eighth grade, back when Bear was still focused on produce.

"Ben reached out to local schools looking for strawberry pickers," Hartsock says. "We would ride our bikes into work and we got paid 35 cents a quart. He promoted the fastest of the strawberry pickers to his summer crew, and we picked sweet corn and blueberries. In the fall, we picked pumpkins. Back then it was called Meadowbrooke Produce."

"The farm crew evolved into the gourd workers," Hartsock says. "We would come in after school and make parts, like han-

dles for baskets, pipes and snowmen hats. As time went on, gourds became the most important thing. Our production area was a tractor trailer bed and we used the old greenhouses as areas to paint gourds. As the business grew, there was more and more work. We eventually got out of the produce business and moved here (125 Potato Road, Carlisle)."

Meadowbrooke Gourds now has 20 full-time employees. Bear focuses on farming 200 acres, planting nearly 50 acres each year in gourds. He rotates crops so gourds are grown on the same plot every four years. Most of his employees work in production, although some farm or work in the company's retail store, which is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Employees work year-around to produce enough decorated gourds to sell during the most-popular season (August through December). Meadowbrooke Gourds typically grows two types of hard-shelled gourds: Martin gourds (pear-shaped) and bottle gourds ("snowman" shaped). Gourds are started from seed in company greenhouses in early May. When they are 3 to 4 inches tall, they are moved outside to harden with exposure to sun, wind and rain. By June 1, they are in the ground. The ones that survive through the growing season unfazed by groundhog attacks or inclement weather continue to grow until the first frost.

Bear depends on high-school-



FRUIT AS ART: Meadowbrooke Gourds produces \$32,000 worth of decorated gourds per week. Owner Ben Bear, a member of Adams Electric Cooperative, offers the artwork for sale at his retail shop at 125 Potato Road, Carlisle; retail shops in 49 states and in Canada, and worldwide through the internet. The gourds are finished by a crew of about 20 employees, including Logan Dennison, above.

ers to pick the gourds and line them up in rows, where they will remain for the winter. In early spring, crews pick up the gourds — usually 400,000 to 500,000 of them each year. The gourds are sensitive to sunlight and need to be covered by summer, but since they are dried, they can be stored for several years before the next step.

As needed, employees gather the gourds and throw them into a high-pressure gourd-washing machine that removes their outer skin. The clean gourds are thoroughly dried to prevent mold problems. Employees then evaluate each gourd and assign it to the crafting room, where it will be

carved with tools or decorated with woodburning equipment, or the finishing room, where it is painted. When completed, the pieces are sprayed with poly-acrylic to ensure a long-lasting finish. The gourds are then boxed and stored until they are shipped to their final destination, or they are sold through Meadowbrooke Gourds' own retail shop. Raw (unfinished) gourds are also available so hobbyists can finish their own if they wish.

Although the company's major focus has been on selling wholesale to outlets across the U.S., internet sales make up the fastest-growing segment of the business.

"We have found a nice niche

and now we are able to tell our story over social media," Hartsock says. "Back when we began, we were cash-and-carry. Store owners would come to trade shows and buy on the spot. That sparked the buzz about us. Shop owners would sell out of the gourds quickly, and that kind of news spreads. At first, we did mom-and-pop craft shops. Then we expanded into gift shops and craft catalogues. We are on the cusp of a pretty big explosion now, and we are gearing up to utilize social media in a big way."

Hartsock says it's impossible to estimate how many gourds have been sold, but he says it's a sure bet there are millions and millions

of them. Although some people keep their gourds on display year-around, many are seasonal decorations. Storing the seasonal decorations isn't a problem, he says, as long as they are kept in a dry location and are wrapped in paper so they don't rub against anything.

Artistic path

Although both Staniszewski and Bear turned to art as a second career, not every artist follows that path.

It didn't take Dan Curry, a member of Forksville-based Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, long to pinpoint his career goal. A native of Missouri, he volunteered to join the U.S. Army in 1970. While stationed in Philadelphia, he had two life-changing experiences: he began taking a few art classes in his free time and he met his wife, Donna.

"After I left the Army, I used the GI Bill to get an education," Curry explains. "My wife was the inspirational force behind my application to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts."

Because his wife's extended family was from the Dushore area, the couple decided to settle there after he finished college.

"I had an interest in building my own house in a rural location," he says. "I wanted to do organic gardening and develop a self-reliant pattern of living. I thought I would live off the land and pursue art."

Then Curry smiles, adding, "There weren't that many art jobs, so I worked doing whatever I could. Plumbing, cooking, factory work. I didn't like it, but I did it."

In 1982, he saw an advertisement for a security job at Red Rock Job Corps in Dushore. During Curry's interview, the questioner asked if he would be interested in teaching art to the disadvantaged students in the program.

(continues on page 21)

FROM SULLIVAN COUNTY TO THE NILE: Dan Curry, a Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative member, holds a small print of the painting of his rural Dushore home that was selected for exhibit in Cairo, Egypt, right. Below, Curry works on a plein air (open air) painting along the Nile River while in Egypt for the opening of the art exhibit featuring his work.

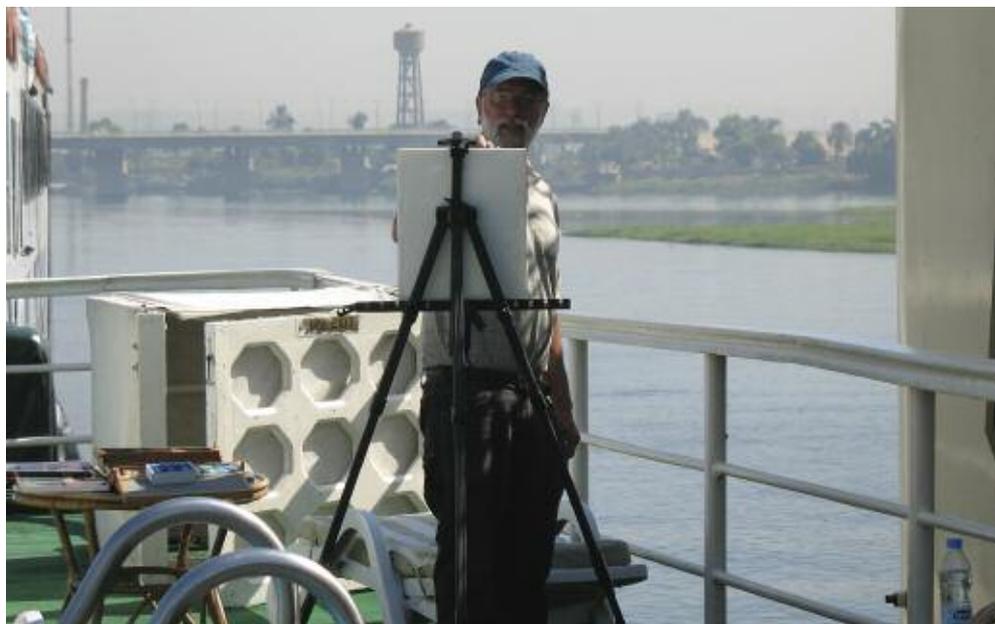
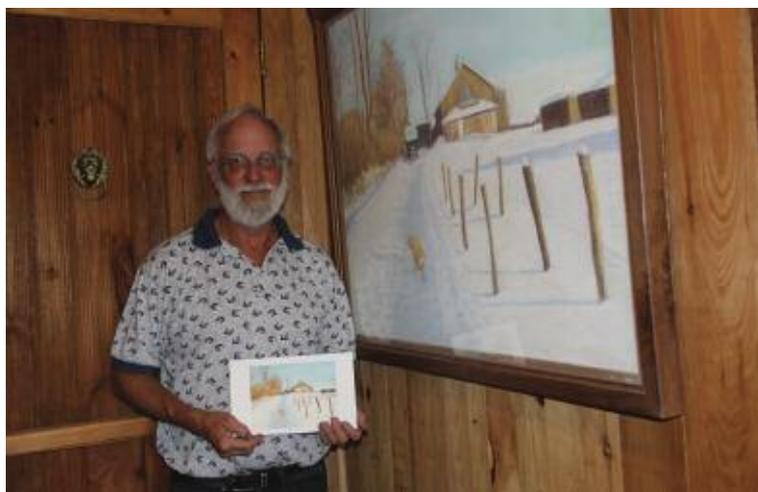


PHOTO BY DONNA CURRY

INFRARED SAUNAS

Removes toxins, burns calories, relieves joint pain, relaxes muscles, increases flexibility, strengthens immune system. Many more HEALTH BENEFITS with infrared radiant heat saunas. Economical to operate. Barron's Furniture, Somerset, PA. 814-443-3115.

LAWN AND GARDEN EQUIPMENT

HARRINGTONS EQUIPMENT COMPANY, 475 Orchard Rd., Fairfield, PA 17320. 717-642-6001 or 410-756-2506. Lawn & Garden equipment, Sales - Service - Parts. www.HarringtonsEquipment.com.

LEGAL SERVICES

GAS LEASE or PIPELINE EASEMENT review: \$199.00. Experienced oil and gas attorneys. All Pennsylvania counties. Further representation and negotiation available at an hourly rate. Gas rights litigation. 717-238-0434. Joshua@reedpalaw.com.

LIVESTOCK AND PETS

PEMBROKE WELSH CORGI Puppies - AKC, adorable, intelligent, highly trainable. Excellent family choice. Reputable licensed breeder guaranteed "Last breed you'll ever own." 814-587-3449.

BLUETICK COONHOUND PUPS. U.K.C. Registered. Excellent hunters or loyal loving companions. \$250. Also my boy has a litter of A.K.C. Beagle pups. \$250 each. We hunt what we sell. 724-463-7485.

LOG CABIN RESTORATIONS

VILLAGE RESTORATIONS & CONSULTING specializes in 17th and 18th century log, stone and timber structures. We dismantle, move, re-erect, restore, construct and consult all over the country. Period building materials available. Chestnut boards, hardware, etc. Thirty years experience, fully insured. Call 814-696-1379. www.villagerestorations.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

BECOME AN ORDAINED MINISTER - Correspondence Study. The harvest truly is great, the laborers are few, Luke 10:2. Free information. Ministers for Christ Outreach, 7558 West Thunderbird Rd., Ste. 1 - #114, Peoria, Arizona 85381. www.ordination.org.

VINTAGE WOODEN BARN FOR SALE - Large barn with stone foundation. 80 years old. Two story - 45' by 65'. Nanty Glo, PA. Make offer. 814-659-4014.

MOTORCYCLE-SNOWMOBILE INSURANCE

For the best INSURANCE RATES call R & R Insurance Associates from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 800-442-6832 (PA).

MOTOR VEHICLES AND BOATS

1971 SUZUKI T350 - 11,750 miles. All original equipment. Good condition. Bargain at \$1,995. Plus antique Simplicity lawn tractor 725. Runs. Needs restoring. \$250. Phone 570-673-5341.

PENNSYLVANIA HUNTING LAND WANTED

OUR HUNTERS WILL PAY TOP \$\$\$ to hunt your land. Call for a free base camp leasing info packet and quote. 866-309-1507. www.BaseCampLeasing.com

RECIPES AND FOOD

SPECIAL OFFER - BOTH COOKBOOKS FOR \$12. "Country Cooking" - \$5, including postage. "Recipes Remembered" - \$7, including postage. Both of these cookbooks are a collection of recipes from men and women of the electric co-ops of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P. O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

SAWMILLS

USED PORTABLE Sawmills and COMMERCIAL Sawmill equipment! Buy/Sell. Call Sawmill Exchange 800-459-2148. USA and Canada. www.sawmillexchange.com.

SHAKLEE

FREE SAMPLE Shaklee's Energy Tea. Combination red, green and white teas that are natural, delicious, refreshing, safe. For sample or more information on tea or other Shaklee Nutrition/Weight Loss Products: 800-403-3381 or www.sbarton.myshaklee.com.

SOLAR GENERATOR

PEPPERMINT ENERGY SOLAR GENERATOR 500-2000 watt portable power source, emergency electricity backup; can be used indoors; no noise, smell, or fuel source. 800-927-6848. info@tallpinesfarm.com, www.tallpinesfarm.com.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE - NEW GASOLINE GENERATOR 6500. Peak 5500 running watts. Four 120V outlets. One 240V, 30 amp outlet. Has no flat wheel kit. \$400. Call 814-839-4679.

TRACTOR PARTS - REPAIR/RESTORATION

ARTHURS TRACTORS, specializing in vintage Ford tractors, 30-years experience, online parts catalog/prices, Indiana, PA 15701. Contact us at 877-254-FORD (3673) or www.arthurstractors.com.

VACATIONS AND CAMPSITES

NEW SMYRNA BEACH, Florida condo rental. Two bedrooms, two baths, pool. 200 yards from beach. NA February. No pets. \$500 weekly, \$1,800 monthly. Call 814-635-4020.

RAYSTOWN VACATION HOUSE RENTAL. Sleeps 11, 4 bedrooms, large dining table, central A/C, 2 fibaths, 2 hfbaths, linens/towels provided, large parking area, near boat launch. Call 814-931-6562. Visit www.laurelwoodsretreat.com.

Wilderness cabin for rent on a thousand acres of private land with views of elk, deer, turkey and great fishing on creek behind cabin and hiking on the north slope of the largest flat top mountain in the world - THE GRAND MESA. Rent is \$500 per week. Call Alan. 970-487-3321.

ALLEGHENY FRONT LOG CABIN RENTAL. New, fully furnished, linens, kitchenware provided. Three bedrooms, one and 1/2 bath. Great room, million dollar view. Bedford Co. 814-754-4512. www.allegHENYfrontexperience.com.

CAMP ON TWO PLUS ACRES - Water, electric near Soldier, PA. Sleeps four plus. Near State Game Lands 244. Call 330-608-5123.

FOR RENT - SEASONAL 2 or 3 bedroom cabins in Sugar Run, PA by day or week on Susquehanna River near kayaking/canoeing launch/rental. Kitchen, bathroom. Call 570-833-0337.

WANTED TO BUY

CARBIDE - Paying cash/lb. - Some examples of items that have carbide pieces at their tips for cutting or drilling are: coal mining machinery - roof bits - road bits - gas/oil/water well drill bits - machining inserts as well as many others. We will pick up your materials containing carbide pieces. We will extract the carbide item from the part in which it is held in most cases. 814-395-0415.

Pre-Assembled - Installs in Minutes!

CasCade 5000
Floating POND FOUNTAIN!
Aerator
Now Available Factory Direct!
MSRP (\$1100) You Pay \$698.95!
Complete with light & timer.
100 ft power cord, 1yr warranty!

Elegance & Improved Water Quality

Call 7 days/week! FAST UPS shipping right to your door!
(608) 254-2735 www.fishpondaerator.com

HOME-GROWN talent

(continued from page 12)

He taught there for 30 years.

It has ended up that Curry is just as well-known internationally for his work with those students as he is as an artist. Both he and his students were invited in 2001 to display their art at the United Nations in New York City in an exhibit entitled "Breaking the Walls of Bias, Prejudice and Stigma."

The U.N. display was coordinated by Marietta Dantonio Madson, chair of the art department at Cheyney University. Later, both Dantonio Madson and Curry were among art teachers who were invited to compete with other U.S. artists and educators to be featured at an international art exhibit at the Cairo Opera House in Egypt in 2006. Both were selected, and among the works Curry displayed in Cairo was a painting of his rural home in Sullivan County,

Curry primarily works in watercolors and pastels. His main subject is landscapes, many of which have won awards, and he has also done portraits of both people and pets. He prefers plein air (in the open air) painting, but he also paints in his studio using photographs as inspiration. He sells original paintings and prints through area galleries, as well as a gallery in Ocracoke, N.C., where many of his landscape paintings are based. His paintings and prints are also available through www.dan-curry.com. That site also has information posted about upcoming painting workshops. He doesn't plan to ever stop teaching; he sees it as his mission to spread to others the joy that painting brings to him. ☀

BUYING BELARUS TRACTORS



1025	820M	572	9345
925	822	532	8345
825	805	525M	800

RUN OR NOT RUN
4WD OR 2WD
Offer Price
Pick Up Anywhere

Please email pictures, call, or text
LKEquipment@gmail.com
320-339-7268